

THE GULL

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE GOLDEN GATE AUDUBON ACADEMY OF SCIENCES FOUNDED 1917



CALIFORNIA

ACADEMY OF SCIENCES

MAR 23 2006

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Planning for the Big Picture at Albany Waterfront

At a time when the Albany shoreline is once again threatened by big development, a coalition of conservation and citizens groups has proposed a ballot initiative that seeks to protect open space and plan for the long-term future of the Albany waterfront. Golden Gate Audubon is proud to endorse the Albany Shoreline Protection Initiative and is actively supporting efforts to ensure that it appears on the November 2006 ballot in Albany.

Los Angeles developer Caruso Affiliated has partnered with Magna Entertainment Corps, current owner of Golden Gate Fields, to build a massive multi-story shopping mall on the racetrack's portion of the Albany shoreline. A development of this scale will have broad consequences for the character of the shoreline and the surrounding communities and local businesses. A mall with significant parking facilities is also likely to cause serious and continued traffic congestion and have local and

regional air quality impacts. But perhaps most troubling to Golden Gate Audubon, a development such as Caruso's will further divide East Shore State Park and could significantly disrupt the birds and other wildlife that depend upon it.

For the last 150 years, the Albany shoreline uses have had almost no connection with the waterfront itself. It's been the site of a gunpowder



Bob Lewis

Osprey soars over Eastshore State Park.

manufacturing operation, a city landfill and now a horseracing track. But in 2002, after years of work by Golden Gate Audubon and others, the East Bay Regional Park District and State of California teamed up to establish the Eastshore State Park along the East Bay shoreline. Albany's stretch of this park is now home to Black Oystercatchers, Ruddy Turnstones and Spotted Sandpipers, as well as thousands of scaup, a species that is well-acknowledged to be declining in recent decades. Eastshore State Park also includes the Albany mudflats, one of the richest waterbird habitats in the entire Bay Area. Massive development of a multi-story mall and parking facility directly adjacent to these areas could upset the delicate balance of birds at the already-fragmented Eastshore State Park.

The pervasive effects of Caruso's proposal highlight how important it is to consider

ALBANY WATERFRONT continued on page 12

The Beauties of Birding in Taiwan

Taiwan surprised me most with its spectacular mountain ranges. Much of the island consists of steep mountains that rise from the heavily populated, industrial and agricultural west coast region. A number of peaks exceed 18,000 feet, falling off abruptly to the less populated east coast. Our guide kept referring to the "good birds" we would find in our forays into these ranges, which we accessed on winding roads, frequently cut by landslides, the result of a particularly heavy summer typhoon season. Fortunately, large portions of these mountain areas are protected as national forests, national scenic areas, and national parks.

We visited Taiwan for nine days of birding in November 2005 during the "dry season," when temperatures were very hospitable for this subtropical island. Arriving in the capital city of Taipei at 6:30 a.m., we met our Canadian cohort, boarded our comfortable small bus, and headed up to the Huisun Forest Station. Our group of 11 eager visitors could not refrain from birding from the moving bus. After all, for many of us every bird was a new species. We spotted a Grey Heron in a roadside rice paddy, Black Drongos on the phone wires, House Swifts over the broad river floodplains, and White-bellied Yuhina in the trees by a rest stop.

At our first official birding stop we were no sooner off the bus than Simon Liao, our very

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The Golden Gate Audubon Society was founded January 15, 1917, and became a chapter of National Audubon in 1948. Golden Gate Audubon Society Supporting Membership is \$25 per year. Renewals should be sent to the Golden Gate Audubon office. The board of directors meets the last Monday of every month (except August and December) at 7:30 p.m. in the chapter office in Berkeley.

The Gull is published nine times per year by the Golden Gate Audubon Society. The deadline for submissions is five weeks prior to the month of publication. Special third-class postage paid in Oakland, CA. Send address changes to office promptly. The post office does not forward *The Gull*.

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Nature Store hours Monday – Friday, 9–12, 1–5

Design and layout e.g. communications

Volunteers Vital to Bay Area Wild Places

One of my favorite things about working with Golden Gate Audubon is the opportunity to explore the San Francisco Bay Area—from our most popular parks and open spaces to little-known corners of the bay. Whether watching juvenile night herons at Crissy Field wetlands or simply driving past the Emeryville Crescent, I am amazed by these precious open spaces and the tremendous diversity of wildlife that inhabit them in the midst of 7 million people.

The more I visit sites that are dear to the heart of our organization, the more I stand in awe of the many volunteers and members who help conserve these wild places. I hope you do not underestimate your role in creating a legacy of wildness for the Bay Area. Think of Heron's Head Park in San Francisco—a park envisioned and created thanks in large part to Golden Gate Audubon volunteers.

Because of the power of your volunteer legacy, we are investing more and more in our volunteer programs. We are delighted to have our new Volunteer and Membership Development Coordinator, Jacob Winiecki, on board, and to expand our programs. Please watch *The Gull* and our website for exciting opportunities to get involved—like in our new quail monitoring program on page 4.

If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Jacob Winiecki in our office to attend one of our regular volunteer orientation events to learn more about what we do and how you can help. Or contact Jacob (jwiniecki@goldengateaudubon.org) about one of the following:

Eco-Oakland Field Trip Leader Co-lead a monthly field trip to Arrowhead Marsh for 3rd, 4th, and 5th graders and their families. Should be bi-lingual (English/Spanish).

East Bay Conservation Committee Members Help track a wildlife issue in the East Bay: study conservation and policy issues, monitor issue closely, attend meetings on behalf of Golden Gate Audubon, draft comments, report to committee and staff.

Conservation Assistant Research conservation issues; write fact sheets about conservation projects and Bay Area birds; research and write web content and newsletter articles.

Ongoing Help with office administration, merchandising; table local events; join a committee; restore wildlife habitat; monitor wildlife populations; lead field trips.

LET US THANK YOU

If you are a current volunteer, please join us for our 2006 Volunteer Thank You Party on Saturday, May 6, from noon to 3 p.m. at the Crissy Field Center in Golden Gate National Recreation Area, San Francisco. The Center is located off of Marina Blvd. in the Presidio. For directions, visit www.crissyfield.org. Please RSVP to Jacob Winiecki by April 30 if you plan to attend, and see our website for additional details.

by Elizabeth Murdock, Executive Director

Golden Gate Audubon Board Election

The 2006 annual election of Golden Gate Audubon Board Directors will be held by written ballots due on May 16, 2006. A ballot form with a proposed slate of three directors and instructions for voting is on page 11. The three candidates for elected directors this year are Bob Bennett, Bob Lewis, and Sylvia Stone. Please take a moment and vote. Every vote counts!



Mountain ranges of Taiwan.

Birding in Taiwan from page 1

personable and able guide, was calling out "good bird! very good bird!"—a phrase we came to know well. We were most excited to observe three large blue birds with long, streaming, white-tipped tails dropping across the canyon before us: our first Taiwan endemic, the beautiful and dramatic Formosan Magpie. Exploring further we found the Black-browed (Muller's) Barbet, a sturdy, robin-sized bird, green with blue, yellow, and red on the head, and a group of the Large-billed (jungle) Crows. Hearing the distinctive, loud call of the Rufous-capped Tree Babbler from a tangle of hanging lianas a few feet before us, with the help of our co-leader and excellent bird spotter, Ten-Di Wu, we pished and smacked and peered into foliage for a good 15 minutes before getting a brief, but satisfying, glimpse of this furtive species. "Good bird!"

Simon Liao, through media friends, had arranged for our group to serve as ambassadors of reason to calm rising hysteria regarding avian flu. Reports appearing in the media advised teachers and parents to keep children away from wild birds and to wear protective masks, gloves, and hats while observing wild birds. The extensive press coverage of our trip reflected a growing national concern with the projected

avian flu epidemic. Our group of birders from Canada and the United States spent every day seeking wild birds without fear of contracting avian flu. Although no avian flu cases had been discovered in Taiwan at the time of our visit, an outbreak was considered likely due to the location of the island on the coastal Asian migratory flyway. Our group appeared both on television and in the newspapers to inform the Taiwanese that they need not be concerned about avian flu while observing wild birds. The exceptional national interest in our small birding party was a recurrent novelty as we



Pheasant-tailed Jacana.

traveled in different regions of Taiwan.

Another one of these regions was the warm, lowland plains of Taiwan's west coast, cut by streams and estuaries and historically developed into fish ponds and rice paddies. Ducks, herons, egrets, and shorebirds were delightfully abundant on the mudflats, along canal edges, and in agricultural stubble fields. Two days of birding here provided us with excellent opportunities for sorting through the shorebirds. Highlights (among many!) included Asian Dowitcher, Wood and Green Sandpipers, Pheasant-tailed Jacana (in its own preserve), and Crested Serpent-Eagle, plus good views of the elusive, beautifully patterned Greater Painted-snipe.

In Taiwan, as in many countries with rich natural resources, the prospective financial benefits of ecotourism are supporting local interest in and commitment to habitat conservation. On our visit to the Black-faced Spoonbill reserve at Tseng-wen estuary, we observed a recovered, wintering population of nearly 400 individuals. Through the efforts of the Wild Bird Federation of Taiwan, the Tainan County Government designated the spoonbill wintering grounds an "Important Wildlife Area." The Tseng-wen Black-faced Spoonbill Reserve, now part of a successful multi-nation conservation plan for the species, is a very popular destination for Taiwanese as well as international visitors.

Our nine days of birding produced a group list of 161 species, which included 10 of the 15 birds endemic to Taiwan, capped by a chance encounter with a small, busy flock of the tiny, but beautiful Taiwan Flamecrest. We enjoyed both the airy solitude of beautiful mountain reserves and the dynamic congestion and colorful nightlife of the cities of Tainan and Taipei. The exciting birding, comfortable accommodations, and exceedingly warm welcome by our Taiwan hosts made this a most memorable trip—and we have yet to explore the wild and scenic east coast of Taiwan. "Good Birds!"

Further details about our trip, including a full species list, bird photographs, and a day-by-day trip report are posted on the website of the Taiwan International Birding Association: www.birdingintaiwan.com.

by Allan Ridley



CELEBRATE EARTH DAY AT PIER 94

After several years of work, Golden Gate Audubon's efforts to restore a high-tidal salt marsh on San Francisco Bay are coming to fruition. The project, a four-acre site located at Pier 94 on San Francisco's southeastern waterfront, was developed to colonize a federally endangered plant, California Sea-blite (*Suaeda californica*) and to provide habitat for fish, invertebrates, and birds. Early this year, 2,000 cubic yards of sand, gravel, and shell were placed at the site, along with the first sea-blite plants. Long-billed Dowitchers, Greater Yellowlegs, and other birds are already taking advantage of the habitat.

Join us on Earth Day, April 22, at noon, when a team of volunteers will add more native plants to the site. If you plan to attend, please contact Jacob Winiecki, volunteer coordinator, at 510.843.7295 or jwiniecki@goldengateaudubon.org.

RESTORE QUAIL HABITAT

As part of Golden Gate Audubon's Save the Quail campaign, restoration teams work two days every month to maintain and enhance native quail habitat in San Francisco parks. Join our monthly work days at Harding Park in San Francisco, from 9 a.m. to noon, as volunteers clear unwanted vegetation and replace it with native plants. We provide gloves and tools, as well as refreshments. The next work day is April 22. On the second Saturday of every month, volunteers restore habitat in the Presidio. For more information, contact Jacob Winiecki. Directions at www.goldengateaudubon.org.

Monitor SF Quail

Golden Gate Audubon is partnering with the Presidio Trust on a Presidio-wide bird monitoring project. The volunteer programs will take place from 9 a.m. – 12 p.m. on Saturday, May 13, July 15 and September 9. Experienced and amateur birders are welcome. Small teams will walk designated monitoring routes throughout the Presidio looking for California Quail and other species of concern. Visual references will be provided at the Crissy Field Center before we head out for each route in the park. If interested, contact Jacob Winiecki at jwiniecki@goldengateaudubon.org; 510.843.7295.



Great Blue Heron at Audubon Canyon Ranch's Bolinas Lagoon Preserve.

David Gardner

HELP SAVE BREUNER MARSH

The fight to save one of the last stretches of undeveloped tidal wetlands along San Pablo Bay may be culminating in a success. The East Bay Regional Park District (EBRPD) has offered to buy the 236-acre parcel known as Breuner Marsh, and the City of Richmond has gone on the record saying it will not oppose the acquisition. The marsh is part of the North Richmond wetlands, which has been designated by National Audubon as an Important Bird Area.

The proposal to purchase the site has been opposed by the property owner, who has announced a plan to build a mixed-use housing development with more than 1,000 units on part of the site. Residents of nearby Parchester Village, an African American

community, want the Richmond City Council to keep a promise made a half-century ago that the marsh and adjacent lands would be preserved as open space. GGA urges you to write to the EBRPD board of directors and insist that they move forward with the acquisition to preserve Breuner Marsh as park open space. Email your comments to Sharon Marshall, board secretary, at smarshall@ebparks.org. For more details on the marsh, see the December *Gull*.

BE A HOST AT AUDUBON CANYON RANCH

Each year, spring through midsummer, thousands of visitors come to see herons and egrets nesting at the Audubon Canyon Ranch Bolinas Preserve, overlooking Bolinas Lagoon in Marin County. Hosts greet and direct visitors and answer questions. A tradition in the 40-year association between GGA and ACR is the opportunity for our members to host at the ranch. This year, GGA is to provide volunteer hosts on April 1, 2, 16 (Easter); May 6, 7, and 27; and June 17, 24, and 25. To volunteer, contact Anna Marie Bratton at annamariobb@earthlink.net or 415.452.2875. If you want to host on a different date, call Yvonne Pierce at 415.868.9244.



SPEAKER SERIES

Talks in the Speaker Series begin at 7:30 p.m. At 7 p.m., healthful, delicious snacks are served by hospitality coordinator, Susanne Shields. Golden Gate Audubon welcomes new Speaker Series coordinators, Sarah Reed and Matteo Garbelotto, who are facilitating programs in Berkeley and San Francisco, respectively.

Montane Salamanders of the Sierra Nevada and Guatemalan Highlands

Sean Rovito

Friday, April 14

San Francisco

Thursday, April 20

Berkeley

North and Central America contain the highest diversity of salamander species on earth. Sean Rovito will present the natural history and evolution of two of California's most unusual and seldom encountered salamanders, the Mt. Lyell and Limestone Salamanders. Both species are endemic to the Sierra Nevada and have puzzled zoologists and biogeographers for decades because of their unusual distribution, behavior and secretive nature. Sean has been doing fieldwork with salamanders for two years in the Sierra Nevada and will discuss their biology and their conservation status. He also will show images from a recent expedition to the highlands of Guatemala where he searched for tropical salamanders. Guatemala has an amazing diversity of salamanders, many found nowhere else. Sean's presentation will include photos of many beautiful species found on the trip, as well as aspects of Guatemalan culture and history. This trip—the first expedition to Guatemala in over 30 years by the University of California, Berkeley's Museum of Vertebrate Zoology—documented biodiversity and changes over time in the salamander fauna. Sean is a UC Berkeley graduate student in the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology.

San Francisco: County Fair Building, San Francisco Botanical Garden at Strybing Arboretum, Golden Gate Park, Ninth Avenue at Lincoln Way. Directions: www.sfbotanicalgarden.org/visiting/page2.html

Berkeley: Northbrae Community Church, 941 The Alameda (between Solano and Marin). Directions: www.northbrae.org/directions.htm

Sierra Nevada Birdlife

Two sessions of the popular class, Birds of the Sierra, formerly taught through Albany Adult School, will be offered this year directly through Golden Gate Audubon. Both will be held at Yuba Pass, between Sierra City and Sierraville. Students stay at motels in the area and bird many different habitats of Sierra Valley and its surroundings, studying such specialties as Swainson's Hawk, Sandhill Crane, White-headed and Lewis's Woodpecker, Williamson's Sapsucker, Calliope Hummingbird, a number of *Empidonax* flycatchers, Mountain Chickadee, Sage Thrasher, MacGillivray's Warbler, Western Tanager, Green-tailed Towhee, and Brewer's Sparrow.

Birds of the Sierra I, taught by Rusty Scalf and Bob Lewis, meets from Thursday, June 8, at 3 p.m., to Sunday, June 11, at noon. **Birds of the Sierra II** with Bob Lewis and Michael Butler, meets from Thursday, June 15, at 3 p.m., to Sunday, June 18, at noon. Enrollment limited to 35 per class. Fee of \$66 includes dinner one evening at the Yuba Pass campus of San Francisco State University.

Registration at Golden Gate Audubon office, 2530 San Pablo Avenue, Berkeley, begins April 7 (*no earlier registration*). Payment ok by phone with credit card or in person at the office after 9 a.m. Detailed itinerary provided upon registration.

See Great Blue Herons and Chicks at Stow Lake

Saturdays, April 15 through May 20
10 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Great Blue Herons have been nesting and raising their chicks at Stow Lake in Golden Gate Park since 1994, when the first documented nest in San Francisco was discovered. Since



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

then, 82 chicks have learned to fly at the Stow Lake colony. Meet at Stow Lake Boathouse and follow signs to Heron Watch program. Naturalists, and interns will be stationed with spotting scopes to offer views into herons' nests, answer questions, and lead 11 a.m. nature walks.

Film Premiere of Naturalist's Work to Save Wildlife

Thursday, April 13

7:30 p.m.

Nancy DeStefanis will show slides of the 2005 Stow Lake Heron colony and screen her new, short documentary film, *Above the Nests: Helen Pratt's Work to Preserve Wildlife in California*, at the Josephine D. Randall Museum Theatre, 199 Museum Way. The film relates Helen Pratt's pioneering observations of the magnificent egret and heron colony at the Bolinas Lagoon Preserve in Marin County. Her 30 years of research helped ban lethal pesticides DDT and Dieldrin.

For more information, contact Nancy DeStefanis at 415.387.9160 or visit www.sfnature.org.

DeStefanis, founder and executive director of San Francisco Nature Education, received the Jefferson Award for Public Service in 2005.



Detailed trip descriptions are located on our website at www.goldengateaudubon.org. If you need further information or have difficulty reaching a trip leader, please contact Susan Groves at 510.654.5954 or groves.susan@gmail.com.

Birding for Everyone

San Francisco Botanical Garden at Strybing Arboretum

Saturdays, April 1, May 6, 10 a.m.

Angie Geiger and Nancy DeStefanis;
Darin Dawson, 415.387.9160;
www.sfnature.org

Meet at front gate of garden. Details and directions in January/February Gull.

Cosponsored with San Francisco Nature Education and Botanical Garden.

San Francisco Botanical Garden at Strybing Arboretum

San Francisco

Sundays, April 2, May 7, 8 a.m.

Allan Ridley and Helen McKenna,
415.566.3241; Ginny Marshall,
650.349.3780

For this half-day trip, meet at front gate of Botanical Garden.

San Francisco Bird Song

Merrie Way, San Francisco

Saturday, April 8

Harry Fuller
415.344.2363, anzatowhee@yahoo.com,
www.towhee.net

All-day field class will combine recorded sounds with chance to hear birds in song and differentiate some of the more common park and garden birds. Limited enrollment. To register, contact Tara Zuardo at 510.843.2222. \$

Carpool to Field Trips

To encourage more carpooling, we've created a mailing list on Yahoo Groups, called GGACarPool. To join, go to <http://groups.yahoo.com/groups/GGACarPool>. Once you join, you can send and receive messages about carpools to GGA field trips. Give your message a title, "Offer Ride" or "Need Ride," plus location and date of the field trip. In the body of the message, note your approximate location (El Cerrito, South Berkeley, etc.). Others who read your message will contact you to arrange a carpool. Give it a try! If you need assistance, e-mail Bob Lewis at RLewis0727@aol.com.

Wednesday at Arrowhead Marsh

Oakland

Wednesdays, April 12, May 3, 9:30 a.m.

Courtenay Peddle, 510.532.8911 (no calls before 9 a.m.), capeddle@there.net

Meet in Arrowhead Marsh lot. Details and directions in January/February Gull.

Alcatraz Island

Thursdays, April 13, May 11

Christian Hellwig, 415.561.4908,
christian_hellwig@nps.gov and
Pamela Llewellyn, 510.843.7904,
seacreature219@sbcglobal.net

Join National Park Service biologist Christian Hellwig for birding sessions on Alcatraz Island, offered exclusively to GGA Supporting Members. Two-hour trips, with GGA co-leader, on 2nd Thursdays of the month through July. Details and directions in January/February Gull. \$

Las Gallinas

Marin County

Thursdays, April 13, 20, 27

8:30 a.m. – noon

Bruce Bajema, 415.456.6271

Meet at Las Gallinas parking lot to join Marin Auduboners in seeing a variety of bird species. Heavy rain cancels.

Hwy. 101 north, exit Lucas Valley Dr. Go east on Smith Ranch Rd. to park. Take sharp left to sewage treatment ponds. Drive past headquarters to lot on left.

Eastshore State Park

Berkeley Meadow

Friday, April 14, 9 a.m.

Bob Lewis

510.845.5001, rlewis0727@aol.com

Meet at Berkeley Meadow entrance. We'll look for breeding bird activity to add to field list for ESSP. About 2-3 hours.

Entrance is at corner of University and Frontage Rd., across from SeaBreeze Market.

Mitchell Canyon

Contra Costa County

Sunday, April 16, 8:30 a.m.

Michael Butler

510.684.3375, mjbkl@earthlink.net

Meet in parking lot for half-day trip to hear and see variety of warblers, vireos, flycatchers and perhaps Lazuli Bunting and Western Tanager. Past highlights: nesting Western Wood-Pee-wee and Coopers Hawks, as well as Golden Eagles and Phainopepla. Bring liquids, sunscreen and good walking shoes.

Highway 24 east to Walnut Creek. Exit Ygnacio Valley Rd. Go approx. 8 miles and turn right on Clayton Rd. After 1 mile, turn right onto Mitchell Canyon Rd. and continue to end of road into official parking lot.

Corona Heights

San Francisco

Friday, April 21, 8 a.m.

Charles Hibbard, Lewis Ellingham,
Brian Fitch

Meet at Randall Museum, end of Museum Way. Details and directions in January/February Gull.

Mines Road

Livermore Area

Saturday, April 22, 8 a.m.

Dave Quady

510.704.9353, davequady@att.net

Trip begins in Livermore and ends there in late afternoon. Expect to see Lewis's Woodpecker, Phainopepla, and Bullock's Oriole; Wild Turkey, Greater Roadrunner, and Golden Eagle among others. Bring food and liquids. Trip limited to first 20 participants. Sign up after

April 2. Carpooling encouraged to/from Livermore and essential during the day. Leader will provide directions and carpooling info.

Point Reyes National Seashore 18th Annual All-Day Birding Blitz

Marin County

Saturday, April 22, 8 a.m.

Leon Abrams, 510.843.4107 (home),
leonabrams@earthlink.net;
Cathy Purchis, Catpur@value.net

Fast paced, multi-habitat, noncompetitive trip covers the Five Brooks Pond area, Limantour Spit, Drakes Bay, Fish Docks and parts of Pt. Reyes, ending at Bear Valley, producing approx. 100 species. Meet at Five Brooks Trailhead parking lot. Bring water, food, and wear layered clothing. A joint activity of GGA and National Park Service. \$

Five Brooks Trailhead lot is approx. 3.5 miles south of Olema on west side of Hwy. 1.

Tilden Regional Park

Alameda County

Sunday, April 23, 9 a.m.

Lewis Cooper
510.526.1773, lbcpr@earthlink.net

Meet at Nature Center lot for half-day trip of Jewel Lake and other areas. Orange-crowned Warblers, House Wrens, and Black-headed Grosbeaks, and migrating hummingbirds. Heavy rain cancels.

Enter park from Canyon Drive (where Spruce meets Wildcat Canyon Rd.) or Shasta Rd., off Grizzly Peak Blvd., Berkeley; follow signs to Nature Center.

Aquatic Park

San Francisco

Sunday, April 23, 9:30 – 11:30 a.m.

Carol Kiser, SF Maritime National Historic Park Ranger, 415.561.7100 or 561.7104

Meet at foot of Hyde Street Pier (Hyde and Jefferson). Beginners' walk to discover birds in the urban environment. Dress in layers. Wheelchair accessible.

SF Birds at Merrie Way

Sunday, April 23, 8 a.m.

Harry Fuller
415.344.2363, anzatowhee@yahoo.com,
www.towhee.net

Meet at Merrie Way, unpaved lot at west

Bicycle Trips

Kathy Jarrett

510.547.1233 (call for cell number; no calls after 9 p.m.), Kathy_Jarrett@yahoo.com
Bicycle helmet required. Bring lunch and liquids. Dress in layers. Rain cancels.

BART schedules: www.transitinfo.org

San Leandro to Hayward on SF Bay Trail

Saturday, April 1

Meet at 8 a.m. at San Leandro BART or 8:30 a.m. at San Leandro Marina Park, last parking lot, for this 20-mile round-trip excursion. Details and directions in *March Gull*.

Iron Horse Trail

Alameda County, Alameda

Saturday, April 8, 8:15 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Meet outside turnstile at Dublin/Pleasanton BART. Flat 20-mile trip from Dublin to Pleasant Hill on paved bicycle paths. Brief stop in Danville at Farmer's Market, then ride to Hap Magee Ranch Park in Alamo for lunch and birding. We'll bird ponds at Heather Farms Park, Walnut Creek, ending at Pleasant Hill BART. All levels welcome.

Iron Horse Trail map: www.ebparks.org. Heather Farms Bird checklist: www.diabloaudubon.com/index.php.

end of Pt. Lobos above Cliff House. Follow birds and seasons at one of SF's most beautiful spots. Reservations required.

Eastshore State Park

Rydin Road to Meeker Slough

Wednesday, April 26, 9 a.m.

Rusty Scalf
510.666.9936, rfscalf@sbcglobal.net

Meet at end of Rydin Road at Point Isabel for 2-mile round trip along Bay Trail on paved, flat ground. Open water, salt marsh and coastal brush habitat. See early breeding activity and shorebirds.

Central Ave. in El Cerrito, west over freeway. Turn right at first stop sign, Rydin Rd. Go to the end. If no parking available, park at other Point Isabel lot and walk across the park.

Lake Merritt and Lakeside Park

Oakland

Wednesdays, April 26, 9:30 a.m. – noon

Hilary Powers, 510.834.1066,
hilary@powersedit.com; Ruth Tobey,
510.528.2093, ruthtobey@earthlink.net;
Travis Hails, 510.451.1207 (no calls after
9 p.m.), travishails@yahoo.com

Meet at spherical cage near Nature Center at Perkins and Bellevue Sts.

Bus: Take 12, N, or NL bus to Grand & Perkins and walk into park on Perkins. **Car:** park in free lot at the boathouse, 568 Bellevue.

Lake Merritt

Oakland

Saturdays, April 29, 8 a.m.

Travis Hails, 510.451.1207 (no calls after
9 p.m.), travishails@yahoo.com

Meet at spherical cage near Nature Center. Designed for novice and intermediate birders. Handicapped accessible. For directions, see April 26 trip.

Coyote Hills Regional Park

Fremont

Sunday, April 30, 8:30 a.m.

Anne Hoff, 510.845.5908,
Anne2210b@sbcglobal.net

Meet at Visitor Center parking lot for half-day trip. We will bird varied habitats, looking for nesting waterfowl, waders, songbirds and raptors. Bring liquids.

From East Bay, take I-880 south to 84/Dumbarton Bridge exit. Exit on Paseo Padre Pkwy. Turn right and continue north one mile, left on Patterson Ranch Rd. to Coyote Hills. Bring \$5 bill for parking kiosk.

Sibley Volcanic Regional Preserve

Sunday, April 30, 8:30 a.m.

Emily Serkin, 510.481.1168,
eserkin@girlsinc-alameda.org

FIELD TRIPS continued on page 9



This month's bird sighting reports followed the usual February script: plenty of interesting winter hold-overs but few new birds of note. Perhaps birders were distracted by the Superbowl, Winter Olympics, and the Maverick's Surf Contest. Surely spring migration will bring the cure for March Madness.

LOONS TO DUCKS

This winter has proved to be a banner year for Red-necked Grebes. A Feb. 3 grebe count at Bodega Harbor, SON (RS) recorded 10 birds, up from 6 last month. Crissy Field, SF, is usually dependable for a Red-necked Grebe but only 2-3 were observed through the 19th (JC; mob). Further inland, a Red-necked remained at Shadow Cliffs RP, ALA, through the 25th (AE; mob). The only tube-nose reports were Northern Fulmars observed by shore-based seawatchers along the SM coast (AJ, RTh, DW). A high of 72 fulmars cruised the coast off Ocean Blvd in Moss Beach, SM, on the 21st (RTh).

Four Central and South Bay destinations hosted Greater White-fronted Geese, with a high count of 9 reported at Arrowhead Marsh, ALA, on the 5th (SH). Lone Snow Geese were noted at Richardson Bay, MRN, on the 4th (GC; mob) and on Salt Pond A2W, SCL, Feb. 21-25 (FV; GL). A Ross's Goose made sporadic appearances at Lake Merritt in Oakland, ALA (mob) and another visited Bayfront Park in Menlo Park, SM, on the 2nd (ADM). Cackling Geese were observed at scattered locales and a single Brant searched for eel grass at Vincent Park, Richmond, CC, on the 20th (JHa).

Eurasian Wigeons were well represented and Eurasian Green-winged Teal were ID'd at 3 locations: Rush Creek OSP, MRN (DDS; MS); Pescadero Marsh, SM (BF; JRy); and Las Gallinas Sewage Ponds, MRN (DR; DDS). Tufted Ducks were reported at several sites while the lone Harlequin Duck this month was the continuing resident at Coyote Pt. Marina, SM (RTh). Two White-winged Scoters distracted gull watchers at Venice SB in Half Moon Bay, SM, on the 3rd (AJ). Through at least the 9th, 2-3 Black

Scoters joined the grebes off Crissy Field, SF (JC; JR, MZ). The sole Long-tailed Duck report was from Princeton Harbor, Half Moon Bay, SM, on the 21st (RTh).

RAPTORS TO ALCIDS

The pasturelands around Flannery and Robinson Roads in eastern SOL remained the preferred winter home base for a couple Ferruginous and Rough-legged Hawks (mob). Dark and light morph Ferruginous Hawks were noted at the Russian River mouth at Jenner, SON, on the 3rd (RS). On the 9th, a black morph Rough-legged Hawk offered an education opportunity to Silverado Middle School students in Napa, NAP (MBe). A Golden Eagle wandered over Arrowhead Marsh, ALA, on the 5th (SH). Prairie Falcons remained concentrated in south and central SCL and eastern SOL. The Flannery/Robinson Rd. Mountain Plover flock remained in residence through the 20th (mob). On the 28th, a birder near the Richard "Fresh Air" Janson Bridge on Hwy 37 (SON) determined that 4 Mountain Plovers in a nearby field were not decoys (LH).

Venice SB in Half Moon Bay, SM, remained a gull watcher's dream this month, with the specialty being Slaty-backed Gulls (*Larus schistisagus*). By the end of the month, 9 confirmed or probable Slaty-backed had been ID'd and photographed, including 3 adults, a 3rd cycle, 3 2nd cycle, and 2 probable 1st cycle birds (AJ, DVP, RTh; mob). The massive gull flock also included a Vega Herring Gull on the 11th (DVP, RTh) and at various times included as many as 3 1st cycle Glaucous Gulls (EL, DVP, RTh; mob). Bayside, the gull flock at EEC in Alviso, SCL, also featured a 1st cycle Glaucous Gull throughout the month (MM, BBo; SR).

Black-legged Kittiwakes came in to the coast at Moss Beach on the 14th (RTh); Duncan's Landing (SON) on the 25th (TE); and Venice SB on the 28th (DW). A Caspian Tern made an early appearance on the 28th at Arrowhead Marsh (ES). Despite the abysmal breeding season Marbled Murrelets experienced last summer, more than



Swamp Thrasher.

300 were tallied on Feb. 21 in the water off Venice SB (RTh). High Murrelet counts were also reported from the Monterey Bay area around Santa Cruz. Finally, 8 Ancient Murrelets were noted from Duncan's Landing on the 3rd (RS) and 2 more showed up in Moss Beach Feb. 14-15 (RTh; JRy).

DOVES TO THRASHERS

A solo Eurasian Collared-Dove made a 1 day appearance at Candlestick Pt., SF, on the 25th (RF). Another 1 day wonder, a Red-naped Sapsucker checked out North L. in GGP, SF, on the 4th (AL). In contrast, the Eastern Phoebe at Del Valle RP, ALA, remained dependable through the 21st (mob). The Fairfield (SOL) Blue Jay (*Cyanocitta cristata*) was equally dependable at a backyard feeder on Willota Drive and around the Ivama Market (mob).

Two out-of-range Yellow-billed Magpies returned to their previous haunts near the Allemand Boatyard at India Basin, SF, on the 25th (PSa). Likewise, 3 Western Bluebirds, 2 males and 1 female, reappeared at Lobos Dunes, Presidio, SF, beginning the 5th (BF; JRy). Mountain Bluebird numbers were down to 3 at Flannery and Robinson Roads on the 12th (BP). Meanwhile, the Sage Thrasher at Buchli Station Rd., NAP, continued through the 4th (DT).

WOOD WARBLERS TO FINCHES

Scattered warbler reports totaled 9 species

but nothing unusual. The Summer Tanager pair showed a continuing preference for the eucalyptus trees around the Conservatory of Flowers in GGP (mob). An early or overwintering Western Tanager showed up briefly at Stanford Univ., SCL, on the 13th (KP). A flock of 6 Vesper Sparrows were sighted along Cantelowe Rd., north of Vacaville, SOL, Feb. 19-20 (RM; CL). Two Grasshopper Sparrows made an early appearance on Mt. Burdell in Novato, MRN, on Feb. 10 (DL). One of 3 Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow weathered the high tide on Feb. 28 at East 3rd Ave. in San Mateo, SM (RTh; JJ, JM). Three Swamp Sparrows frequented the marsh at Littlefield Ave. in South SF, SM (RTh) and one remained ensconced at the wastewater treatment plant on Radio Rd. in Redwood Shores, SM (RTh; DM, KO).

Through Feb. 12 an Orchard Oriole pair still called the Fort Mason (SF) community garden home (JR; AH). An Oriole at the Julius Kahn playground (Presidio, SF), previously described as resembling a Baltimore or a Scott's, was ID'd as a Bullock's on the 24th (BF). Another Bullock's was located at Richardson Bay Audubon Center & Sanctuary in Tiburon, MRN, on the 4th (GC; mob). Two Red Crossbills frequented Mountain L., Presidio, Feb. 3-9 (JC; MZ). Finally, Evening Grosbeak pairs made stopovers at Pt Reyes Station, MRN, on the 2nd (JW) and at Ulistac Natural Area, SCL, on the 17th (DD).

FIELD TRIPS from page 7

Meet at park entrance for half-day walk to look for spring migrants and resident grassland and forest birds.

From Hwy 24, take Fish Ranch Rd. exit, east of Caldecott Tunnel. Continue .8 miles to Grizzly Peak Blvd. Turn left, go 2.4 miles on Grizzly Peak to Skyline Blvd. Turn left on Skyline, proceed to entrance.

Wildcat Canyon Regional Park

Alameda County

Sunday, May 7, 8 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Malcolm Sproul, 925.376.8945

Meet by Arlington Clubhouse in El Cerrito. We'll drive to trailhead on Rifle Range Rd., then walk a hilly transect of the canyon to bird brushlands, oak woodlands, riparian streamsides and grasslands. Bring lunch

Wood Warbler Sightings

Nashville Warbler

2/6 Middle L., GGP, SF BF
2/26 Fort Mason, SF AK
2/17 Corona Heights, SF BF

Northern Parula

2/24 Julius Kahn playground, BF
Presidio, SF

Yellow Warbler

2/3 L. Merced Boat House, SF MBr

Hermit Warbler

2/10 Tilden Park, ALA JS

Palm Warbler

2/6 Huffaker Park, SF BH
2/14 Seaport Blvd in Redwood PM
City, SM
2/24 Oracle parking lots in AW
Redwood Shores, SM

Black-throated Vireo

2/26 L. Merritt, ALA BM

Antelope Valley

2/4 Coyote Cr. Golf Course, MM
SCL

Northern Waterthrush

2/7-26 Berkeley Aquatic Park, mob
ALA
2/1-8 Charleston Rd Marsh, DM, BJ,
SCL MD, BP

Hooded Warbler

2/4 West San Jose backyard KP
birdbath, SCL

Abbreviations for Observers. ADM, Al DeMartini; AE, Art Edwards; AH, Alan Hopkins; AJ, Al Jaramillo; AK, Andy Kleinhesselink; AL, Arthur Lyons; AP, Andy Pedler; AW, Adam Winer; BBa, Bob Battagin; BBo, Bill Bousman; BF, Brian Fitch; BG, Betty Groce; BH, Bob Hall; BJ, Bob Juhl; BM, Bruce Mast; BP, Bob Power; BR, Bob Reiling; CL, Calvin Lou; CW, Charles Walker; DD, Dennis Dowling; DDS, Dave DeSante; DL, David Lukas; DM, Dean Manley; DQ, Dave Oquady; DR, Don Reinberg; DSt, Dan Singer; DSw, Danny Swicegood; DT, David Takeuchi; DVP, David Vander Pluym; DW, Dave Weber; EL, Eric Lichtwardt; ES, Emily Serkin; FV, Frank Vanslager; GC, Graham Chisholm; GL, Garrett Lau; HH, Hillary Heard; JA, Jeff Acuff; JC, Josiah Clark; JHa, John H. Harris; JHi, Jan Hintermeister; JJ, John Johnson; JM, Joe Macho; JR, Jean Richmond; JRo, Jim Rowoth; JRy, Jennifer Rycenga; JS, Jim Scarff; JW, Jim White; KDM, Karen DeMello; KO, Kris Olson; KP, Kay Partelow; KR, Kathy Roberston; LH, Lisa Hug; LL, Laura Look; MBe, Murray Berner; MBr, Michelle Brodie; MD, Matthew Dodder; MG, Maureen Geiger; MM, Michael Mammoser; MS, Michael Stevenson; MSM, Mike San Miguel; MZ, Matt Zlatunich; PB, Paul Billig; PM, Peter Metropulos; PMC, Pat McCulloch; PSa, Paul Saraceni; PSc, Paul Schorr; PF, Robbie Fischer; RIM, Roger Muskat; PP, Puth Rudesill; RS, Rich Stallcup; RTh, Ron Thorn; RyT, Ryan Terrill; SH, Scott Hoope; SP, Shantanu Phukan; SR, Steve Rottenborn; TE, Ted Elliott; TH, Travis Hails; TMG, Todd McGrath; TO, Trent Orr

Semicolons separate original observer(s) from subsequent observer(s). Abbreviation "mob" = many observers, "oob" = other observers. Information is compiled from BirdBox transcripts and regional listservs; the author apologizes for any errors or omissions. Special thanks to Brent Plater for assistance in compiling data.

Richard "Fresh Air Dick" Janson is recognized as one of the premier decoy carvers in the American West. He worked on his ark near the Sonoma Creek Bridge for most of his life. He died in 1951 (www.dot.ca.gov/dist4/trivia.htm).

Abbreviations for Counties and Others. ALA, Alameda; CC, Contra Costa; Cr., Creek; Cyn., Canyon; EEC, Environmental Education Center; Ft., Fort; GGP, Golden Gate Park; L., Lake; Mt. Mount; MRN, Marin; N., North; NAP, Napa; NWR, National Wildlife Refuge; OSP, Open Space Preserve; Pt., Point; PRNS, Pt Reyes National Seashore; RP, Regional Park; Rd., Road; Res., Reservoir; RS, Regional Shoreline; S., South; SB, State Beach; SCL, Santa Clara; SF, San Francisco; SM, San Mateo; SOL, Solano; SON, Sonoma; SP, State Park; SR, State Reserve; WPCP, Water Pollution Control Plant

and liquids. 6-mile hike led by Malcolm for 27th year!

Arlington Clubhouse is on Arlington Ave., next to tennis courts between Brewster Dr. & Thors Bay Rd.

Garin Regional Park

Alameda County

Sunday, May 14, 8 a.m.

Anne Hoff, 510.845.5908,

Anne2210b@sbcglobal.net

Meet in parking lot. Garin Regional Park offers riparian corridor, grassy hillside attractive to raptors, and a small pond. Habitats are also used by picnickers. Bring liquids.

I-580 to Foothill Blvd./Rt. 238 exit in Hayward. Continue straight onto Foothill Blvd. In 1.5 miles, major artery divides. Veer left to continue on Mission

Bldv./238. In 2.5 miles, turn left onto Garin Ave. Follow uphill to parking lots. Meet in area farthest to left (north). Alternate: I-880, exit at Industrial Blvd. from either north or south, turn right at T intersection with Mission, and turn left up the hill on Garin.

Lassen Volcanic National Park

June 23, 24 and 25

Dan and Joan Murphy,
murphsf@comcast.net

Annual GGA Lassen family camping excursion. Camping facilities available at Manzanita Lake Campground on first come basis until July 1. Lodging available at Hat Creek Resort, Old Station. 530.335.7121. (Note: Reservations made last June at Hat Creek Resort for 2006 trip were lost. Please call to renew.)



Humans are always trying to set new records for flying around the world in an aircraft. These are amazing feats of endurance and strategic planning. Meanwhile, a Christmas Island Frigatebird made an astounding record-breaking non-stop flight of her own last October. Lydia, who wore a satellite tracking device affixed by a study group from the American Bird Conservancy, made a 26-day, 2,500-mile trip in search of food for her young—without landing.

Frigatebirds cannot be mistaken for any other large bird. The first time I saw one, I understood the name. A frigate was a warship propelled by sails. Without so much as a flap of a wing, the bird soared over my head, swiftly and silently. Frigates were often marauding ships, so sailors also call the birds man-o'-war birds.

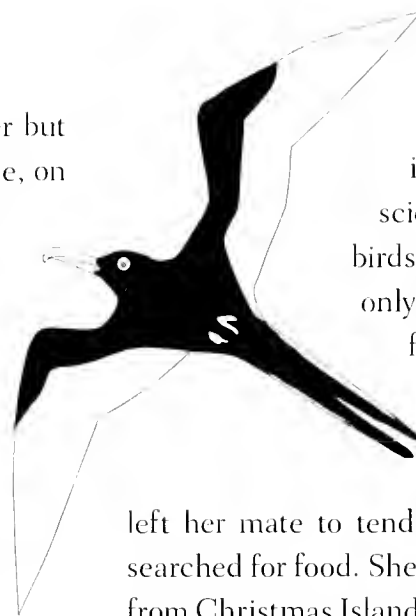
The 5 species of *Fregatidae* breed on small tropical islands, usually in association with other seabirds. Occasionally they appear as vagrants inland after cyclonic storms. Members of the frigatebird family range in length from 31 to 41 inches long, and have the greatest wing area in proportion to their weight of any bird. Their long bones are actually very light tubes with paper-thin walls, making the birds light and maneuverable on the wing. Their bodies are small and hang low, like a gondola, below the main surface of their wings. Assisted by a deeply forked tail, they are able to do fantastic stalls and aerobatics.

Frigatebirds forage for squid, fish, and other marine creatures, which they eat

while flying. They can drink sea water but prefer fresh water, consumed, of course, on the wing. Their feet are webbed so they can swim, but their plumage is not oiled and quickly becomes wet, making the birds helpless. They can take wing only from treetops, a rocky cliff, or other elevation. In a pinch, they can manage flight from a sandy beach. They can't walk, so they perch on treetops and shrubs, where they also nest.

The most eye-catching feature is the male's gular pouch, bright red skin that can be distended while courting the female. For most of the year, the gular is just pink skin on the throat, but for three to four weeks the pouch is inflated. This takes 20 to 30 minutes, well worth the time if it attracts a female. The red balloon makes quite a splash against the glossy black plumage.

The Magnificent Frigatebird is found on both sides of the Panama Canal. The first nesting colony in the United States was discovered in 1969 in Key West. The species is also on islands such as the Dry Tortugas in the Gulf of Mexico. The birds range from Baja California south to the Galápagos. Greater and the Lesser Frigatebirds are pantropical in distribution but do not usually appear in the Caribbean. The Christmas Island Frigatebird and the Ascension Island Frigatebird breed only on the islands after which they are named. The former is critically endangered, the latter rare.



Lydia, the wandering mother, stunned scientists, since frigatebirds were known to fly only a few hundred miles from their nesting sites, staying away for just a few days at a time. Lydia

left her mate to tend the chick while she searched for food. She departed October 18 from Christmas Island in the Indian Ocean, about 310 miles south of Indonesia's capital, Jakarta. She circled back on October 26 and flew between Java and Sumatra, also in Indonesia. From there Lydia flew across Borneo Island on November 9 before flying back over Java and returning November 18 to her nesting site. It is presumed she regurgitated a meal for her chick.

Lydia's feat is notable, but other species of birds have made longer flights. A Gray-headed Albatross took a 46-day around-the-world trek, according to Birdlife International, a Britain-based conservation group that monitors threatened species. Lydia can't compete with the Arctic Tern, which migrates 11,000 miles *each* way! The Lesser Golden-Plover probably makes the longest uninterrupted flight, migrating from Alaska to Hawaii and other south Pacific islands—2,000 to 2,400 miles non-stop. Birds that make such long flights are masters of soaring, conserving energy by seldom flapping their wings, using thermals and winds to propel them efficiently. No wonder we envy their accomplishments.

See Eastern Warblers at Primetime

May 6 – 11

Golden Gate Audubon Supporting Members have an exciting opportunity to see eastern warblers on a spring trip to Tennessee, led by John Robinson, professional tour guide and ornithologist who operates the natural history company On My Mountain. He is also author of *An Annotated Checklist of the Birds of Tennessee*.

Participants will visit such spots as Cross Creeks and Reelfoot National Wildlife Refuges. These and other areas provide excel-

lent habitat for warblers—including Prothonotary, Kentucky, Cape May, Cerulean, Hooded, and elusive Golden-winged—and for a host of other migratory and resident species.

The fee for a group of four or five GGA Supporting Members is \$2,109 per person and \$1,649 for a group of six or more. Fee includes guide services, lodging, and meals. Participants pay their own airfare to Nashville. For an itinerary and signup sheet go to www.onmymountain.com/my_images/TN2006Brochure.pdf. Deadline for sign up is April 15. For further information, contact John Robinson at birdshrike@cs.com or 707.864.8279.

Donations

Thank you for your generous donations to support our many conservation, education, and member activities!

GOLDEN GATE (\$1,000.00 to \$9,999.99)

Bob Bennett & Elizabeth Shih (*Pier 94*), Beryl Ness (*Working Assets*), Ohlone Audubon Society (*Altamont Pass*) Walter and Elise Haas Fund

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IN MEMORY OF

Bobbie Sneyd: Paul Barale and Katheryn Kenworthy, Lonnie & Leslie Calmes, Stuart & Ruby Gronningen, R.H. & Sarah Hopkins, Mark & Peggy Pence, Pryor Rule

IN HONOR OF

Elizabeth Murdock: Dr. & Mrs. Murdock (*United Way of Lane County*)
Mel McKey's volunteer work: Dr. Jessica Krakow

GGA extends a special thank you to the family and friends of Dr. Ira Gordon Davidoff, who have made many generous gifts in his memory. Dr. Davidoff was Chairman and Medical Director of Bay Valley Medical Group, as well as a member of GGA. An avid outdoorsman, he loved birds and was looking forward to increasing his birding knowledge. Gifts in his memory will be used to support our growing birding and public education programs. We are honored to celebrate Dr. Davidoff's life in this way.

Dr. Michael Alazard, Andrea Bronzo, Brown & Toland Medical Group, The Camden Group, Cardiovascular Consultants Medical Group Inc, Chabot Nephrology Medical Group Inc, Dr. Norman Cheung, Nadine Coffin, Margaret Dracker, Bruce & Mariellen Faria, Robert & Martha Feinberg, Katie Fletcher, Kevin & Dora Goto, Kenneth Hausman and Ellyn Lazarus, Shelly Horwitz, David Joyner & Blue Shield of California, Kennan & Associates, Cheryl Christopher Kohleriter and Eric Kohleriter, Terrie Lopes, Henry Loubet, Constantine and Abigail Malavazos, M & I Trust, McNeil Insurance Agency Inc, Littler Mendelson, Reed E. and Sylvia K. Miller, Patient Accounts staff & UM staff; Helen Mango, Rose Goulart, Frances Gomes, Saad Abassi and Fatana Amin-Abassi, Cindy Rinker, April Robertson, Dorothy Rubsamen, Kevin P. Schaeffer and Kate F. Johnson, Erwin & Therese Schrittwieser, Jay, Andrea, Kathy & Allan Share, Sweeney Kovar LLP Certified Public Accountants, Gary F. and Linda West Tom

Please Vote!

The 2006 election for the membership to choose three directors for the Golden Gate Audubon Board of Directors will take place by written ballot. The board's Development Committee, with the approval of the board, has nominated the candidates listed below. Thirty-five ballots are needed to meet the quorum requirement of the GGA bylaws.

Members in good standing may vote by completing and signing the form of ballot and returning it to the GGA office, 2530 San Pablo Avenue, Berkeley, CA 94702.

The ballot deadline is May 16, 2006.

BOB BENNETT

Bob Bennett is chair of the San Francisco Conservation Committee, which he has organized and stimulated into becoming one of the most active wildlife conservation committees in San Francisco. He is running for his second term as an elected director.

BOB LEWIS

Bob Lewis is currently a designated director

and chair of the Education Committee. Bob is well known to members as an organizer and compiler of our Oakland Christmas Bird Count, as a skilled field trip leader and an instructor of GGA birding classes.

SYLVIA STONE

Sylvia Stone is also a designated director and chair of the Human Resources Committee, which, under her guidance, recently produced a set of policies and guidelines for GGA employees.

Ballot For Election of Golden Gate Audubon Directors

Ballots received by the May 16, 2006, ballot deadline will be counted in accordance with the choice specified for each candidate.

DIRECTOR NOMINEE	TERM ENDING	YES	NO
Bob Bennett	2009	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bob Lewis	2009	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sylvia Stone	2009	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

MEMBER NAME

MEMBER SIGNATURE

shoreline development comprehensively, with an eye toward future generations. For this reason, Golden Gate Audubon has joined Citizens for Albany Shoreline, Citizens for East Shore Parks, and the Sierra Club in supporting a shoreline plan that gets away from piecemeal planning for the Albany waterfront. The Albany Shoreline Protection Initiative ensures that the community's desires for open space and Bay access to the waterfront are incorporated into any future plan for development of the Albany shoreline.

The initiative calls for establishment of a Citizens Task Force, comprised of Albany voters, to guide the creation of a comprehensive waterfront plan. This committee would oversee a two-year community planning process for the entire Albany waterfront and provide guidelines for sustainable, green, commercial development, should the city, library and school district need to replace lost revenue in the event Golden Gate Fields shuts down. The plan will include a 600-foot setback from the waterline, which will protect offshore wildlife including waterfowl, allow for expansion of the dunes

behind the Albany beach and buffer from inland development. This setback will also preserve and enhance scenic views at the Albany shoreline.

The citizens of Albany have already rejected at least two shoreline plans proposed by developers in recent years, and the current multi-story mall proposal by Caruso is no different. A recent public opinion poll conducted by Evans/McDonough regarding the proposed Caruso Waterfront Shopping Mall found that 60 percent of Albany voters opposed the idea and that 45 percent strongly opposed it. Given the overwhelming and consistent sentiment of the community, it's time for the citizens of Albany to be proactive and develop a plan of their own for the waterfront, rather than being reactive and fighting off massive development proposals one-by-one.

It's true that Measure C, overwhelmingly passed by Albany voters in 1990, already requires a citizens' vote to approve any changes in zoning laws at the waterfront. And because current zoning prohibits the type of general retail that is expected under Caruso's current mall proposal, Albany residents do have some recourse

against large development proposals along the shoreline. But Measure C does not give Albany residents a process by which they can proactively and comprehensively plan for both open space and thoughtful development at the shoreline, with an eye toward the long-term character of the waterfront. This is why there is a need for the Albany Shoreline Protection Initiative.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

GGA supports the Albany Shoreline Protection Initiative, a ballot measure designed to preserve wildlife for future generations and to give the citizens a say in thoughtful planning and development of the Albany waterfront. To get the initiative on the Albany November 2006 ballot, we need your help to gather signatures throughout April and educate citizens all summer, leading up to the election. To help with these efforts, contact our volunteer coordinator, Jacob Winiecki, at 510.843.7295 or jwiniecki@goldengateaudubon.org. For further information on this issue, contact Samantha Murray at 510.843.6551 or smurray@goldengateaudubon.org.

by Samantha Murray, Conservation Director

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

The Gull is the newsletter of the Golden Gate Audubon Society. As a Supporting Member of Golden Gate Audubon, you receive a subscription to *The Gull*, a 10 percent discount on items purchased at our nature store, and the satisfaction of supporting local conservation efforts. Local members of the National Audubon Society are encouraged to join Golden Gate Audubon directly. Contact our office at 510.843.2222 for details.

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